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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

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AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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DAMASCUS, LONDON, TEL AVIV, USUN, FOSIF ROTA
SPAIN, DIA WASHDC

DEPT ALSO PASS INFO ROUTINE: ALGIERS, BAGHDAD, CAIRO,
JIDDA, KUWAIT, PARIS, ROME, STUTTGART FOR ELG,
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SIX TWO, CTG SIX ZTYOPPT TWO, FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA.

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION JULY 4: TELL ZAATAR BEING MOPPED UP;
PALESTINIANS CONDEMN SYRIAN AND OTHER ARAB STATES'
INDIFFERENCE

REF: BEIRUT 5824

1. SUMMARY: TELL ZAATAR BATTLE STILL NOT COMPLETELY OVER, AS
CHRISTIANS APPEAR CAREFUL TO AVOID ADVERSE PUBLICITY OF
BLOODBATH AT END. INTENSIVE FIGHTING CONTINUES ALONG SECONDARY
FRONTS IN BEIRUT AREA, BUT PALESTINAINS UNABLE RELIEVE BESIEGED
CAMP, BLAMING ADVERSE SYRIAN ARTILLERY FIRE. FIGHTING
ELSEWHERE IN BEIRUT AREA AND IN OTHER PARTS OF COUNTRY
INDECISIVE. AL DELEGATION CALLS ON PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST SIDE AS
51ST CEASEFIRE FACES INTO OBLIVION. FATAH DEPUTY KHALAF
BITTERLY DENOUNCES SYRIAN ROLE AND ARAB STATES' INDIFFERENCE TO
FATE OF TELL ZAATAR, THREATENS END OF ATTEMPTS AT DIALOGUE AND
REPRISALS AGAINST NUMEROUS ARAB REGIMES WHEN CAMP FALLS.
LEBANESE SIDES HARDEN ATTITUDES. LARGE INTERNATIONAL CONVOY
DEPARTED BEIRUT FOR DAMASCUS EARLY JULY 4. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING GROUND ACTION LULL OF SEVERAL HOURS, DURING WHICH
SHELLING OF CAMP CONTINUED, CHRISTIANS AGAIN MOUNTED ASSAULTS
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ON TELL ZAATAR AND ARE NOW WITHIN CAMP PERIMETER. THOUGH
ASSAULT NOT ENTIRELY SUCCESSFUL, MAJOR GROUND ACTION HAS
:3- 3\$. CHRISTIANS APPEAR STILL UNWILLING TAKE HEAVY
CASUALTIES FINAL PUSH WOULD REQUIRE, BUT THEY ARE CLAIMING
CAMP HAS FALLEN AND ANNOUNCE ENEMY WOUNDED WILL BE TURNED
OVER TO RED CROSS ON JULY 5. IN TELL ZAATAR AN IMMENSE
FIRE, VISIBLE SEVERAL MILES, BEGAN AT MIDNIGHT JULY 3, BUT WE
DO NOT KNOW CAUSE. COMTWP

TDPALESTINIAN/LEFTIST ATTACK ON

KAHALE WAS SIMULTANEOUS WITH ASSAULTS ON BSOUSS, BDEDOUN, HOUMAL AND ARAYA ALL IN SAME AREA. ALL ASSAULTS APPARENTLY UNSECCESFUL. PALESTINIANS HAVE ANGRILY DENOUNCED SYRIANS FOR ASSISTING CHRISTIANS IN SEVERAL AREAS BY SHELLING PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST FORCES, PARTICULARLY RELIEF FORCE AT MONTE VERDE S ONG TO RELIEVE TELL ZAATAR. VIOLENT ARTILLERY EXCHANGES CONTINUE ALONG BEIRUT'S EAST/WEST DIVIDING LINE AND HEAVY BUT INDECISIVE FIGHTING CONTINUES AT CHWYAH/AIN EL-RUMMANEH AND AT HADETH/LAYLAKE.

3. ELSEWHERE, SYRIANS, HAVE STILL NOT COMPLETELY RETREATED FROM SIDON AREA AND SHELLS VESSEL ATTEMPTING ENTER PORT JULY 3. VESSEL SAID BY LEFTISTS TO BE CARRYING FLOUR, BUT THERE IS EVIDENCE LIBYANS OR OTHERS THINKING ABOUT BRINGING IN ARMS SHIPMENTS. IN BEKAA CITIES AND IN NORTH LEBANON, SYRIAN BLOCKADES AND FIGHTING CONTINUE. PALESTINIAN SOURCES CLAIM CLASHES WITH SYRIAN TROOPS IN LAKKAR, AT HERMEL AND NEAR OUYOUN EL-SIMANE. HOWEVER, VIOLENCE IN FARAYA/OUYOUN EL-SIMANE AREA APPEARS REDUCED TO ARTILLERY EXCHANGES. VOICE OF LEBANON (KATAEB) ANNOUNCED NEW DEGENERATION OF SITUATION IN NORTH LEBANON WITH BOMBARDMENTS IN AREAS OF RAS-NAHACHE, HAMAT, CHEKKA, ENFE AND AIN IKRINE.

4. DESPITE CEASEFIRE BREAKDOWN, AL DELEGATION CONTINUED EFFORTS WITH JULY 3 VISIT TO WEST BEIRUT BY HELICOPTER FROM DAMASCUS. SEC GEN RIAD, TUNISIAN AND BAHRAINI FOREIGN MINISTERS, AS WELL AS DEPUTY SEC GEN Kholi AND AL MILITARY FORCE CHIEF- OF - STAFF COL. CHEDID, MET WITH PALESTINIAN AND LEFTIST LEADERS AT PLO POLITICAL DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS BEFORE RETURN TO DAMASCUS FOR FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WITH SYRIANS. ACCORDING TO LEBANESE ARAB ARMY-CONTROLLED RADIO LEBANON, CONFIDENTIAL

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RIAD HAD ASKED FRANGIE AND GEMAYEL TO ALLOW AL FORCES INTO TELL ZAATAR AS OBSERVERS. WE HAVE NO WORD OF RESPONSE ALTHOUGH RIGHTISTS THEMSELVES MADE SIMILAR REQUEST TO AL DURING PAST WEEK. AL THREESOME INTENDS PROCEED TO CAIRO JULY 4, PERHAPS AFTER ANOTHER VISIT TO LEB TTU

5. FATAH NUMBER TWO SALAH KHALAF BROKE THROUGH THIN LAYER OF CORDIALITY REMAINING BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND DAMASCUS IN FIRST HIGH-LEVEL PALESTINIAN STATEMENT ATTACKING ASSAD PERSONALLY AS AUTHOR OF PLOT. KHALAF DESCRIBES MARONITE "KFOUR FRONT" AS ONLY A SYRIAN INSTRUMENT AND ATTACK ON TELL ZAATAR AS PART OF SYRIAN PLOT. "IF TELL ZAATAR IS TAKEN WE WILL ERASE THE WORDS CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL DIALOGUE FROM OUR DICTIONARY." KHALAF IMPLICATED REST OF ARAB WORLD AS WELL: "IF TELL ZAATAR FALLS, MANY ARAB REGIMES WILL FALL AS WELL."

PALESTINIAN RELATIONS WITH ARABS, HE SAID, "WILL BE FUNCTION OF THEIR POSITIONS ON THE CAMP." KHALAF ALSO ACCUSES CH TC EETT SZFR.#CHA RBEL KASSIS OF HAVING ACCEPTED DIRECT MILITARY AID FROM ISRAEL, BUT SAYS PHALANGISTS HAVE TRIED AVOID THIS. PALESTINIANS REPORTEDLY HAVE KNOWN FOR SOME TIME THAT RIGHTISTS RECEIVING ISRAELI MILITARY SUPPORT, BUT PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON TOPIC HAVE BEEN AVOIDED UNTIL THIS PAST WEEK. PALESTINIANS SEEM TO BE SUGGESTING POINT OF NO RETURN HAS BEEN REACHED ON COOPERATING WITH LEBANESE RIGHT. Wafa REPORTS YASSIR ARAFAT ARRIVED BEIRUT 0300 JULY 4 LOCAL, BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION.

6. ON CHRISTIAN SIDE, HARDENED ATTITUDES ARE ALSO SURFACING. CHAMOUN MADE STATEMENT JULY 3 SAYING FRANGIE OUGHT NOT RESIGN BEFORE END OF HIS TERM AS PREMATURE DEPARTURE WOULD EXPOSE THE HIGHEST OFFICE TO ATTACK. STATEMENT IS MOST STRAIGHTFORWARD CHAMOUN INDICATION TO DATE THAT HE PUTS NO STOCK IN SARKIS AND ROUND TABLE. PIERRE GEMAYEL ISSUED JULY 3 DECLARATION WITH HIS OLD IDEA THAT PALESTINIANS OUGHT TO BE DIVIDED AMONG ARAB STATES NOW THAT THEY HAVE DEVIATED FROM THEIR NATIONAL OBJECTIVES. GUARDIANS OF THE CEDAR STATED FLATLY THAT CAIRO ACCORDS ON PALESTINIAN STATUS NOT ACCEPTABLE AS CEASEFIRE CONDITION SINCE THEY CONSTITUTE ONLY "PARTIAL SOLUTION" OF PROBLEM. CONFIDENTIAL

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7. ON OTHER SIDE OF TOWN, JUMBLATT REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD AL SEC GEN MAHMOUD RIAD THAT PALESTINIANS AND LEBANESE "NATIONAL MOVEMENT" WILL NOT SIT AT ROUND TABLE SO LONG AS SINGLE SYRIAN SOLDIER REMAINS IN LEBANON. SAEB SALAM ISSUED STATEMENT ACCUSING FRANGIE OF DEALING WITH AL IN DUAL ROLES AS BOTH CHIEF OF STATE AND LEADER OF "FRONT OF KFOUR."

8. GERMAN-SPONSORED CONVOY OF SOME 80 VEHICLES LEFT BEIRUT EARLY JULY 4 FOR DAMASCUS. INCLUDED AMONG 280 PASSENGERS, MAINLY FOREIGNERS, WERE 30 AMCITS AND DEPENDENTS AND 29 AID/AUB PARTICIPANTS, INTENDING ONWARD TRAVEL TO HOME STATES FROM DAMASCUS. SOME 90 AID/AUB STUDENTS REMAIN IN BEIRUT. EMBASSY HAS TAKEN POSITION OF URGING THEM TO LEAVE ON SAME BASIS AS OTHER PERSONS FOR WHOM WE ARE RESPONSIBLE. AUB CONTINUES TO FUNCTION ON LIMITED BASIS. SEELYE UNQTE ROBINSON

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